NOTE XVI.

ON THE GENERIC NAME OF THE SNOW-BUNTINGS

BY

Dr. ERNST HARTERT.

In the "Notes from the Leyden Museum" Vol. XXXII, n°. 1, p. 32, Dr. E. D. van Oort published a note about the generic name of the "Snow-Buntings", and came to the conclusion, that *Plectrophenax* of Stejneger (1882) had to be accepted as the name for this genus. This conclusion, I am sorry to say, is erroneous, in my opinion. Dr. van Oort rejects the name *Passerina* Vieillot (Analyse d'une nouvelle Ornithol. élément., 1816, p. 30) for two reasons. First, because it had been employed in Botany previous to 1816. This, however, is no reason for its rejection, because all modern codes of nomenclature in Zoology have agreed not to consider botanical nomenclature and only to reject generic names if they have been preoccupied in Zoology. Second, because the type of Vieillot's generic name would be *Tanagra cyanea* L. This is also wrong, because the type of *Passerina*, by elimination, is *Emberiza nivalis* L.

Vieillot included in his genus three species: "Ministre" (= *Tanagra cyanea* L., type of *Cyanospiza* Baird, 1858), "Ortolan de riz" (= *Fringilla oryzivora* L., type of *Dolichonyx* Swainson, 1827) and "*Ortolan de neige*" = *Emberiza nivalis* L. The last, not having received another name, thus becomes the type of *Passerina*, and there was no need to create a new name for it in 1882, and Stejneger's name *Plectrophenax* is therefore a synonym of *Passerina* Vieill.

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